

Administration

II. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRACTORS

A. General

The foundation of the business relationship between TMA and the contractor is the contract. The contract normally includes, directly or by reference, requirements of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and its supplements, the contractor's proposal (as accepted by TMA), 32 CFR 199, the Operations Manual, the Policy Manual, the Automated Data Processing and Reporting Manual (6010.50-M), and supplemental instructions officially issued by TMA.

B. Instructions to Contractors

1. Types of Instructions

a. Operations Manual and the Automated Data Processing and Reporting Manual

The Operations Manual and the ADP Manual are the principal vehicles for general operating instructions to all health care delivery contractors. *The official archive copies of these documents are maintained at TMA. The documents and all official changes to them will be maintained at TMA in an electronic medium using the PDF (Portable Document Format) format, and will be available for distribution to contractors via three different media: printed paper, CD-ROM, and downloading from a designated file location in an electronic format. Regardless of publication medium, their printed and displayed appearance will be identical. The principal means of distribution will be via an electronic notification of publication and the contractor's subsequent download of the Manual or change from a TMA designated file location. Paper copies of Manuals or changes to those Manuals will be furnished to contractors only in those limited quantities currently utilized for contract administration. All proposed changes to these documents will be distributed for review and comment in an electronic medium, using PDF as the document format, and comments must be returned to TMA in an acceptable electronic format. Contractors shall furnish the TMA Contracting Officer with designated point(s) of contact and email address(es) for:*

- (1) *Review and comment on proposed Manual changes, and*
- (2) *Notification of final publication of Manual changes.*

b. Policy Manual

The Policy Manual provides instructions and guidance pertaining to TRICARE benefits. It provides policy and coverage information as well as interpretation and some limited operational requirements. *The official archive copy of this document is maintained at TMA. This document and all official changes will be maintained at TMA in an electronic medium using the PDF (Portable Document Format) format, and will be available for distribution to contractors via three different media: printed paper, CD-ROM, and downloading from a designated file location in an electronic format. Regardless of publication medium, their printed and displayed appearance will be identical. The principal means of distribution will be via an electronic notification of publication and the contractor's subsequent download of the Manual or change from a TMA designated file location. Paper copies will be*

furnished to contractors only in those limited quantities currently utilized for contract administration. All proposed changes will be distributed for review and comment in an electronic medium, using PDF as the document format, and comments must be returned to TMA in an acceptable electronic format.

c. Letters

Letters are normally used for routine contract administrative matters not covered in above. Letters which give new instructions are signed by a Contracting Officer. Routine contract administrative matters do not include TRICARE benefit determination and reimbursement functions for which instructions are provided by above. In limited circumstances, urgent instructions may be issued in an individual letter and then followed by Operations Manual and/or Policy Manual changes.

2. Implementation of Instructions

a. Contractors are required to implement changes in instructions as specified in the “changes” clause of the contract. If a contractor is unable to comply by the effective date, the TMA AM&S Contracting Officer, shall be notified, in writing, within ten (10) days of receipt of the instructions. The notification shall include the reasons for the noncompliance and a proposal for reaching compliance. The proposal shall include milestones, if appropriate, and a firm date for completion.

b. It is essential that a contractor distribute TRICARE instructions to all of its appropriate personnel, including any subcontractor and, as needed, contracted providers. The contractor shall ensure that new instructions are distributed and implemented on a timely basis. TRICARE manuals (including additions, deletions, and amendments) and instructions will be forwarded as required by changes or need for clarification. Requests for additional copies or for clarification shall be directed to the contracting officer or contracting officer’s representative.

3. Communications with TMA

a. Contractors shall:

(1) Provide a complete reply to TMA requests for comments and/or cost estimates on proposed changes to the Policy Manual (6010.47-M), the Operations Manual (6010.49-M), and the Automated Data Processing and Reporting (ADP) Manual (6010.50-M) within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the request unless a different period of time is provided by TMA in the transmitting correspondence. TMA will allow thirty (30) days for response to major changes. Fewer days will be allowed for minor changes; i.e., changes which are not complex or changes which do not require substantial programming effort and/or extensive cost proposals by the contractor. In addition, in the event of an urgent need imposed by law or a program requirement under which significant loss to the government would result from delay, a period of less than thirty (30) days will be imposed, whether it is a major or minor change.

(2) Provide timely response to all requests for information directed to them by TMA.

(3) All cost estimates/proposals for changes for additions shall be sent to TMA with a detailed breakdown of the time required for analysis,

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II.B.3.a.(3)

programming and testing requirements including machine time, where appropriate, Proposals involving substantial amounts of time may require on-site review by TMA personnel.

(4) Use assigned contracting officer representatives at TMA as the initial point of contact for program interpretation or other forms of guidance unless it is a situation which falls within the specific exceptions listed in [Section II.B.3.a.\(5\)](#), below, or in the Operations Manual instructions.

(5) Respond directly to the TMA Contracting Officer. The contractor may receive:

(a) Requests for information necessary to answer in-house correspondence.

(b) Requests for information applicable to individual appeal cases and final decision letters.

(c) Communications regarding termination or suspension of providers of care.

(d) Requests for information on potential fraud or abuse cases.

(e) Information concerning scheduled on-site reviews.

(f) Communications regarding litigation cases.

(g) Provider authorization questions.

(h) Questions or requests for comment on press releases and related materials published by TMA. Copies of releases shall be sent to all contractors to keep them informed of TRICARE information activities.

(i) Information concerning the creation and transmission of health care service records.

